

Beat: News

ISIS behind surge terror attacks in Africa, says officials

CEP Eye on Extremism Report

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AFSDData Research & Analytics International - "Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs Nasser Bourita and Victoria Nuland, the U.S. undersecretary of state for political affairs, hold a joint news conference after a meeting of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS in Marrakesh, Morocco, on May 11." ref: Washington Post

"The Islamic State's regional affiliates in Africa are carrying out lethal attacks at a tempo far surpassing that of the parent organization that once ruled large swaths of Iraq and Syria, Morocco's chief diplomat said Wednesday at a meeting of the global alliance battling the militant group. Sub-Saharan Africa, home to several branches of the Islamic State, now accounts for nearly half of all deaths worldwide attributed to the terrorist group, Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs Nasser Bourita said. "We remain lucid on the state of the ISIS threat, which has not diminished," said Bourita, whose country is hosting a conference of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. He said that sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 48 percent, or 3,461, of the deaths worldwide attributed to ISIS in 2021.

"Today, 27 terrorist entities based in Africa are registered on the U.N. Security Council sanction list," Bourita said. "This is a clear indicator of their connections to major global terrorist groups." Secretary of State Antony Blinken had planned to attend the meeting here, but canceled after testing positive for covid-19. Victoria Nuland, undersecretary for political affairs, and Yael Lempert, acting assistant secretary for Near Eastern affairs, led the U.S. delegation."

Washington Examiner: Intelligence Community Chiefs Give Update On Afghan Terrorist Threat

"Terrorist organizations within Afghanistan's borders are still roughly a year or more away from having the capability to launch attacks against Western countries, though intelligence officials remain concerned about the possibility. Defense officials told lawmakers in the fall that groups like al Qaeda and Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) could gain that ability within six to 12 months, but Defense Department and intelligence leaders have pushed that back. Lt. Gen. Scott Berrier, the director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, testified in front of the Senate Armed Services Committee on Tuesday and said the threat from ISIS-K could take "a year, slightly longer, and longer for al Qaeda." He is "more concerned about ISIS-K in Afghanistan and the fact that they have had known successful and catastrophic attacks in Canada, which does not portend well for the future," the DIA chief explained. "Al Qaeda has had some problems with reconstituting leadership, and to a degree, the Taliban have held to their word about not allowing al Qaeda [to] rejuvenate," Berrier added.

Syria

Voice Of America: Global Coalition Warns No Rest For Fight Against Islamic State

"Nearly three years after U.S.-backed forces in Syria seized the last remaining territory held by Islamic State's self-declared caliphate, members of the global coalition charged with eradicating the terror group warn their task is not getting any easier. Despite IS's loss of several key leaders and intelligence that suggests a dwindling number of fighters in the core areas of Iraq and Syria, coalition members say the reputation and ideology of the group — also known as ISIS or by the Arabic acronym of Daesh — continues to hold its affiliates together while fostering its growth. Officials attending Wednesday's ministerial in Marrakesh, Morocco, say nowhere is the threat more worrisome than in Africa, where a joint coalition communiqué described IS as an "evolving threat." "Our shared assessment of the dangerous rise of terrorist threat in Africa has led to the emergence of a tailored approach of the coalition's support to the African continent," Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs Nasser Bourita said following the meeting."

Nigeria

Reuters: Gunmen Kill Seven Nigerian Soldiers In Ambush On Army Patrol -Sources

"At least seven soldiers were killed and two others were missing in Nigeria after they were ambushed by gunmen while on patrol in the eastern state of Taraba, two military sources said on Wednesday. The attack occurred on Tuesday night when troops from the 93

Battalion came under heavy fire in the village of Tati in the Takum local government area of Taraba. A brigadier general and his aide were missing after the attack, the sources said. "Right now a search and rescue operation is ongoing," said an army source from the 93 battalion who declined to be named because he is not authorised to speak to the media. There was no claim of responsibility for the attack. An army spokesman did not immediately respond to calls for comment. Taraba suffered two separate bombings last month that were claimed by Islamic State militants and killed at least three people and injured more than 30. read more For more than a decade, Nigeria has grappled with an Islamist insurgency that has targeted communities and security forces in northern parts of the country."

Voice Of America: Global Coalition Preparing 'Holistic' Assault On Islamic State In Africa

"Overshadowed for months by Russia's war in Ukraine, the ever-present threat from Islamic State is again being thrust onto the global stage, with the United States voicing hope that it is not too late to prevent the terror group from turning yet another continent into a dangerous playground. Officials from 85 countries and a handful of organizations, including the Arab League, NATO and Interpol, are in Marrakech, Morocco, this week for the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS' first ministerial in Africa. Co-hosted by Morocco and the U.S., the meeting will focus on "ways to sustain pressure on ISIS remnants globally," according to a State Department statement issued Tuesday. But U.S. officials who spoke to VOA prior to Wednesday's ministerial said that much of the focus will be on Africa, where the threat from Islamic State, also known to coalition members as ISIS, IS and Daesh, has been percolating. "It's a very serious threat," said Doug Hoyt, the acting deputy envoy for the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. "We're talking thousands [of fighters]."

"Most troubling is the ISIS affiliates that are currently active in the sub-Saharan continent because the numbers are extraordinary, and they have a lot of territory to play around with," he said."

Al Jazeera: Togo: Eight Soldiers Killed In Attack By Suspected 'Terrorists'

"Eight soldiers have been killed and 13 wounded in an attack in northern Togo, the government said, marking potentially the first deadly raid on its territory by armed groups who have killed thousands in neighbouring countries. Before dawn on Wednesday, a group of heavily armed gunmen ambushed an army post in the Kpendjal prefecture near the border with Burkina Faso, the government said in a statement. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack. The government blamed "terrorists", without providing specifics. Security analysts said the attack was likely carried out by a local al-Qaeda affiliate that is based in Mali but in recent years has spread south into Burkina Faso. Groups linked to ISIL (ISIS) and al-Qaeda have carried out hundreds of attacks across the Sahel region of West Africa in recent years, focusing mainly on the landlocked countries of Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali.

Togo has so far been spared the violence, which has forced millions to flee their homes, but security experts have warned about a spread in operations that could encompass coastal states like Togo. In 2018, Togo's military launched an operation to stop armed groups ghosting in from the north. Security forces repelled an attack by gunmen on an outpost in the same area as Wednesday's attack in November, without sustaining casualties."

Source: ARAC International strategic media partner CEP

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